



The United States Conference of Mayors

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Mayors Meet With House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Forge Partnership with New Congressional Leadership

Mayors Present 10-Point Plan on Issues Impacting Cities

Washington, D.C. -- The leadership of The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM), led by Conference President Trenton, New Jersey Mayor Douglas H. Palmer, met with newly-elected House Speaker Nancy Pelosi today in a special strategy session on Capitol Hill. The purpose of the meeting was for mayors to discuss critical issues facing America's cities and to forge new partnerships as Congress sets its legislative agenda.

"As CEOs of the nation's cities, mayors know all too well the challenges America's families face. We are here to stand with Speaker Pelosi and the new Congressional leadership to forge new partnerships that will invest in families and cities in a way that creates jobs and safe communities, and provides an environment where families and children can thrive," said Conference President Douglas H. Palmer. "We welcome the opportunity to work with this new Congress in a bi-partisan way as we move forward together to build a stronger America."

Mayors shared with Speaker Pelosi their 10-point plan called "Strong Cities, Strong Families for a Strong America" which will be presented at The U.S. Conference of Mayors 75th Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C., January 24-26.

The Mayors' 10-Point Plan includes:

1) Energy and Environment Block Grant

The mayors are calling for a block grant to provide funding directly to cities and urban counties for programs that improve community energy efficiency; develop and implement community strategies to reduce carbon emissions, develop and implement community and transportation energy conservation programs; encourage the development of new technologies and systems to decrease the nation's dependence on foreign oil; and promotion and development of alternative/renewable energy sources.

2) Federal-Local Partnership on Crime Prevention

The mayors are calling for a federal trust fund to provide flexible resources for the deployment of law enforcement personnel, support local innovations, fight domestic violence and fund technology that helps fight crime. Specifically, funding for COPS and the local block grant should be restored.

3) Community Development Block Grants

The mayors recommend that CDBG formula funding be doubled to \$8 billion. This additional funding would address the delayed projects and activities which have resulted from cuts to CDBG, and further build on the proven record of an effective affordable housing and revitalization program.

4) Affordable Housing Fund

The mayors support an affordable housing fund to be administered by the Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs), (not by HUD or state housing agencies) funded at least 5 percent of their profits, with local government projects eligible to be assisted.

5) Public Housing

Operating Subsidies - The mayors support restoration of all public housing operating subsidies in FY 2007, including funding that was not part of the budget request but that is now needed because of utility costs previously not anticipated.

HOPE VI – The mayors support the restoration of HOPE VI to a funding level that returns the program to an effective national tool for public housing development.

6) Infrastructure Tax Incentive and Bonds

The mayors are calling for tax incentives, bonds, and other measures to support local and state efforts, and stimulate private sector participation to improve infrastructure including transportation, water, wastewater, brownfields, energy, telecommunications, schools and affordable housing options in America's cities.

7) Competitive Workforce

The mayors call for timely reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act, and full funding of its programs to ensure a significant investment in lifelong learning for every American citizen.

8) Children and Youth

No Child Left Behind - It is critical that mayors be involved in every aspect of No Child Left Behind reauthorization, including discussions on full funding, teacher quality, performance standards, testing and evaluation, and methods of assessment and accountability.

Children's Health Insurance – It is crucial that funding for programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIPs) be increased to their full authorization levels.

Summer Youth - The mayors are calling for a new summer youth employment initiative.

After-School Youth – Mayors are calling for an increased funding commitment directly allocated to cities for quality after-school programs.

9) Homeland Security

Interoperable Communications - The mayors are calling on a well-funded, stand-alone, Federal emergency communications grant program to carry out initiatives to improve interoperable communications, including flexible direct grants to cities and their first responders.

Transit Security – The mayors are calling for a flexible Federal transit security initiative to improve security in the areas of communications, surveillance, detection systems, personnel and training, and not require a local or state match. Furthermore, security funds should go directly to the operator of that system or the jurisdiction providing the security.

Funding Mechanism – Mayors contend that improvements must be made in the grant application process and delivery mechanism for federal homeland security resources to make sure that the process is user-friendly, the funding quickly reaches cities, and that funding is flexible to meet local needs.

10) Unfunded Mandates

Mayors are calling for new legislation to strengthen the federal-local partnership and further restrict the ability of Congress to impose unfunded federal mandates on cities or preempt local authority.

More information on each legislative priority can be found on the U.S. Conference of Mayors website at www.usmayors.org.

Mayors who attended the strategy session include: USCM President Trenton (NJ) Mayor Douglas H. Palmer, Akron (OH) Mayor Donald Plusquellic, Charleston (SC) Mayor Joseph Riley, Philadelphia (PA) Mayor John Street Elizabeth (NJ) Mayor Christian Bollwage, North Little Rock (AR) Mayor Patrick Henry Hays, Stamford (CT) Mayor Dannel P. Malloy, Palatine (IL) Mayor Rita L. Mullins, Virginia Beach Mayor Meyera Oberndorf, Sugar Land (TX) Mayor David Wallace, Providence (RI) Mayor David Cicilline, Oklahoma City (OK) Mayor Mick Cornett, Rochester (NY) Mayor Robert Duffy, and Piscataway (NJ) Mayor Brian Wahler.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.

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